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HOUGH, SYLVIA JENNINE. Light, Pattern, and Domestic
Architecture. (1973)
Directed by: Mr. Walter Barker. Pp. 3.

The thesis consisting of twelve watercolors
and two drawings was exhibited in the Weatherspoon
Art Gallery of the University of North Carolina at
Greensboro from April 22 to May 6, 1973.

35mm color slides of the exhibited works are
on file in the Jackson Library of the University of
North Carolina at Greensboro.

Light, Pattern, and Domestic Architecture

by

Sylvia Jennine Hough

A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Fine Arts

Greensboro
1973

Approved by

Walter Barker
Thesis Adviser

APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved by the following
committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at The
University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Thesis Adviser

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Oral Examination
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Walter Barker

Gilbert L. Compton

Joan Gregory

Andrew Martin

April 20, 1973
Date of Examination

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CATALOGUE

Watercolors

	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Size</u>
1.	3:00 P.M.	1973	5" x 6"
2.	12:30 P.M.	1973	19½" x 18"
3.	11:30 A.M.	1973	20" x 20"
4.	9:30 A.M.	1973	20" x 20"
5.	11:00 A.M.	1973	22" x 31"
6.	2:30 P.M.	1973	22½" x 27½"
7.	10:00 A.M.	1973	27½" x 31"
8.	9:30 A.M.	1973	22½" x 19½"
9.	10:30 A.M.	1973	21" x 21"
10.	9:00 A.M.	1973	28" x 27"
11.	2:00 P.M.	1973	15 3/4" x 14"
12.	1:30 P.M.	1973	19½" x 19"

Drawings

	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Size</u>
1.	Morning Studies	1973	11 3/4" x 11½"
2.	April 2, 1973	1973	6" x 10"

The Greeks said that to marvel
is the beginning of knowledge
and where we cease to marvel,
we may be in danger of ceasing
to know.¹

Light and pattern are the main sources of inspiration and investigation in my work. I select and represent abstracted situations involving the light of the sun that so characteristically accentuates isolated chimneys, roofs, gables, cornices, banisters, woodwork, bricks and clapboards of American houses, while simultaneously creating original patterns of superimposed planes of shadows. Light, linking planes, emphasizing diagonals, articulating directions and illuminating surfaces, creates and simplifies the patterns. The directness and source of light are apparent. Light is the medium through which form as pattern is fully recognized in my work. Thus shadows are positive and are never accidental or secondary.

My aim in painting is the registration of the relationships among the elements of light, the sky, and domestic architecture. My primary interest is in the abstract relationships of the shapes and spaces created by the light and not in the realistic rendering of the

¹Gombrich, E. H., Art and Illusion, Princeton University Press, (Princeton, 1969)

architectural elements of the house. The impulses and stimulation that I receive from the interaction of the light and the architectural elements determine the resolution of the forms, both the disciplined and graphic sense of the composition and the dynamics of the design. In the paintings formal order or design also takes precedence over the representation of time and place. Although this order is not indigenous to architectural elements solely, I feel that it is important to study one subject and to develop an understanding of the patterns on its surfaces. I objectively approach the painting of light-produced patterns in an attitude of cool detachment. My subjects are neither specifically urban nor rural and are not in any way meant to be a social comment.

Commencing with small drawings of "slice of life" from a larger, whole relationship, I color the shadows in yellow and emphatically state the planar intersections in dark lines. The directness of this approach reads quite positively, and in this way I can test the abstract power of the composition. In the paintings the formal ordering of these compositional elements derives from the precise pencil drawings. I use watercolor as a transparent medium of color and line in which subtle tonal variations are rendered within sharp linear definitions to enhance the purity of the architectural

forms. The colors and textures correspond to those of the subjects, and the colors range from the white of the Murillo etching paper to near black. The selected elements of the buildings are painted "in situ" from a car, sidewalk, yard, or porch at distances of two feet to two-hundred feet with the aid of binoculars. The size of the paintings varies from approximately six and one-half by nine inches to twenty-four by thirty-two inches.

Although my study was well under way before I sought to place myself in any sort of historical perspective, I acknowledge my debt to Charles Sheeler and the Precisionist painters, Edward Hopper, John Manning, and the architect Frank Lloyd Wright. I am also influenced by a group that demanded rigorous logic and experimentation as a basis for a carefully thought out demonstration of visual perceptions - the 1930's geometric abstractionists such as Josef Albers and Piet Mondrian; and finally by the early Russian Constructivists as their philosophies concerning the constant rhythms of line and the forces of constructed sculpture relate to my objective and external world.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Gombrich, E. H. Art and Illusion. Princeton:
Princeton University Press, 1969.